

THE NASSAU LITERARY MAGAZINE.

EDITORS:

A. G. CAMERON, N. J.
WM. S. ELDER, O.

JOHN W. McKECKNIE, O.
MARION M. MILLER, O.

MANAGING EDITORS:

JOHN C. MATHIS, ILL.

STEWART PATON, N. Y.

TREASURER:

GEORGE REYNOLDS, N. J. LOCK BOX 17.

VOL. XLI.

FEBRUARY, 1886.

No. 8

Culture and Conservatism.

BAIRD PRIZE ORATION, BY GEO. T. EDDY, '86, N. Y.

THIS is an age of universal questioning. In nature, animate and inanimate, and in the sphere of human activity as well, men are seeking causes, reasons and laws. All things are under challenge to give account of themselves. Suspicion is prevalent; doubt as to the reality of things, the existence of mind, the possibility of knowledge. Modern criticism finds no holy ground, nothing too sacred for its closest scrutiny. It need occasion no surprise, then, that culture is forced to assume the attitude of defence. Men of fame and influence are its strenuous assailants. They allege that it fetters progress with the weight of antiquity; they term it "a safe and elegant imbecility," which is only too glad to avoid exposure by seclusion from the world. They say that, wrapped in the mantle of self-complacent pride, it averts the glance from the unpleasant spectacle of humanity belonging to an alien class forsaken and in anguish.

If this be the real outcome of our culture, judgment against it cannot be too swift or too severe. What answer

do its advocates make to the accusation? What do they claim as its characteristics and results? First it aims at a symmetrical and continuous development of all man's powers, moral as well as intellectual. It is eager for all knowledge, but values chiefly that which relates to human thought and endeavor. Information, it holds, to avail, must be crystallized into wisdom. It loves and cherishes in everything, the true, the beautiful and the good.

Again, culture at least claims to be altruistic. In the words of Matthew Arnold, it is "possessed by a passion for doing good." The truths to which it attains, universal as they are in their application and value, must be proclaimed as far as possible to every individual, be he lowly or exalted. The cloistered monk is no longer the ideal scholar. That ideal finds its true expression in him who seeks the highest discipline and enlightenment, to the end that, in imitation of his Master, he may give sustenance and sympathy to some hungry, despairing soul.

But the main point at issue is still untouched; the question recurs: Is not culture conservative in its tendency? And the answer must be—Yes; but only in the highest sense of the term. To be stupidly tenacious of whatever is old, to oppose every innovation, to prefer ease to progress, this is not true conservatism. That consists, says one of America's foremost scholars, in "holding together the things of the past which the experience of the ages has proved to be worth conserving. It discriminates between the permanent and the transient in human history, traces through the centuries the line of progress, and rejoices in every step that is forward toward the goal."

There are two ways in which this conservatism finds expression. Truths that have been discovered are fundamental and necessary to those that shall be discovered. Cut off the scientists, the philosophers from all connection with the past and obligation to it, and they are involved in a maze of doubt and perplexity. Their largest, if not their only,

task, is to secure deductions from the facts, to combine into orderly structures the materials which others have gathered for them long before.

But if it were possible, the student is more indebted to his intellectual ancestors for their methods than for their direct attainments. It is his privilege and delight to join the hallowed company of the sages and philosophers, the prophets and poets of all ages and all climes, to listen to their admonitions for his guidance in the pursuit of knowledge, to follow out the course in which they were striving. They esteemed Truth above all else beside, ever sought it in nature and man, ever worshiped it in God. If their example and counsels be obeyed, the onward movement of mankind, far from being impeded, will take on a fuller volume and a stronger sweep.

The value of conservative culture is especially manifest in the spheres of philosophical and moral thought, and of national and individual life. With what computations will the science of sciences estimate its indebtedness to Socrates and Plato? Who shall weigh the influence of Aristotle and Bacon? The great truths they discovered sway with immortal potency the minds of thoughtful men; even their errors serve to point out the right way more clearly. Time is the test of philosophy. Only the precious metal of thought retains through the ages an undimmed lustre. But on the other hand, we shall find that the battles waging now were as stubbornly contested centuries ago. The most subtle and dangerous of modern errors was anciently met and overthrown only to re-appear in a sort of resurrection of evil. Yet there is no occasion for dismay. The past assures us that the outcome shall again be a triumph for truth. But even if history afforded us no clue as to the value and permanence of systems of thought, the scholar, with powers so quickened by companionship with regal minds, can weigh their claims in scales of certainty. Wisdom imparts insight, gives power to discriminate between the genuine and the

false, and to gauge with exactness the relative values of theories.

Again, in political science and the conduct of state affairs, this conservative force finds a wide field of operation. The scholar is a good citizen in that he obeys the law; but pre-eminently so in that he can and does speak with authority on measures and systems of government. He who saw that the "foundation of political theory was on the broad base of historical observation," was the architect of the modern science. From this historical observation there springs not only a thorough knowledge of the present, but a prescience of the future. The experience of all time teaches the student that the two ways lie open for men and nations also; that the wrong choice in the case of both alike, leads certainly to destruction. How carefully, then, will he study the causes of political disaster, and lay bare to the most stringent tests the ultimate principles of action. But culture also finds in all governments a dominant idea, an underlying tendency, which, like the movement of a glacier, is unnoticed but irresistible. It declares that no policy or measure can be efficacious or permanent unless it is in line with this dominant idea. In view of the extreme complexity of national existence, the widest experience and the profoundest insight are imperative requisites to those who would guide and guard the State. It is no time for the demagogue, the political scjolist and charlatan. Only the scholar can adequately cope with the gigantic problems that menace the very existence of society. "Knowledge and wisdom shall be the stability of thy times."

Such is the influence of conservative scholarship upon systems of thought and forms of government. Its bearing on the intellectual life of others is no less important. It inculcates, as opposed to the raw conceit and self-sufficiency of radicalism, humility of intellect and reverence for rightful authority. It delights to pay fealty to

"The dead,
But sceptered sov'rans who still rule
Our spirits from their urns."

Nay, it does more; in the midst of the jostling throng of those who strive for mastery in wealth, or social station, or fame, or power, the conservative scholar, inspired with hope from the past, points calmly to that ideal to which we may ever closer and closer approximate, but may never attain—the ideal of perfection.

"O human soul! so long as thou cans't so
Set up a mark of everlasting light,
Above the howling senses ebb and flow,
To cheer thee and to right thee if thou roam;
Not with lost toil thou laborest through the night!
Thou makest the heaven, thou hop'st, indeed, thy home.

Death and the Epicurean.

AFTER LESSING.

LISTEN, brothers, to my tale:
Yester-night—so strange it seems—
As I quaffed the ruby wine,
Death entered, wan and pale.

His scythe hung on one fleshless arm,
The other menaced as he spake:
"Bacchanalian reveler, hence!
On thee I cast my charm!"

"Dearest Death," cried I in woe,
"Take me not from the fair world!
Here is blood-red wine for thee!
Drink, and let me go!"

Then he grasped the cup and laughed:
"Fool, shall I thy life release
For one small cup of mortal joy?"
Yet still the wine he quaffed.

As down the precious draught he tossed,
He called a health to Pestilence,
Let fall the cup, and sudden cried,
"Mortal, my errand's lost!"

He spake in tones so ghostly wild,
I dared not trust my new-born hopes.
"Thy wine," he cried, "unnerves my arm,
Death's might thou hast beguiled!

"Live on, for Death must pass thee by!
Over thy wine I dare not reach:
Live on, till thou hast drained the dregs
Of wine and life, then die!

"So shall I ever live, divine!"
I cried in ecstasy: "O, Death,
Thou hast forever lost thy power!
I'll never leave my wine!"

The Priest of St. Patrouille.

ST. PATROUILLE is on one of the tributaries of the Loire. Its inhabitants derive its name from a saint. The local antiquaries tell tales of a camp stationed there during some of the numerous wars of past days, whence sallied forth expeditions confounded in the popular mind with the patrols of the district, and the squads of dragoons billeted among the peasantry of the parishes. But their more inland neighbors, with the jealousy of goodness knows what, always exclaim: "What? Patrouille! *Va pour les Patrouilleurs!* It's their element, like their name." Meaning to cast unkind reflections on the muddy river, and, by an implication, on its beautiful banks, which, in spite of derogatory remarks, undulate slowly upwards, through a luxuriant mass of grasses and flowered fields, bordered on the river edge by willows and other trees, to the scattered farms radiating from the center, the hamlet itself, across whose main street runs the little stream that empties into

the more pretentious river, which, in turn, joins the great one. But all this is neither here nor there, and has little to do with the story, except in so far as it is the outline in which is pictured, and the background over which moves, the black frock of the *curé*, loving and beloved by his flock, tall, broad-shouldered, on whose face, clean-cut and clean-shaven, showed the lines which indicated, perhaps, a life of care or study, or asceticism, but which gave a subdued strength to feature and the impression of a latent will to lineament. Perhaps it was with a dimly prophetic sense of this force of character (for is there not, perchance, a heredity that looks forward to an end, as well as backward to a source?) that his parents named him Gabriel, to which they added (by that strange neutrality of masculine surnames which occurs so frequently, especially in noble families, and which ends in a series, requiring a double portion of grace to carry,) the name Marie. And well did his first name fit him, and well did he, with his powerful frame, spiritualized face, in spite of its human furrows, and calm, authoritative look (a triple compound of nobleness of race, nobleness of character and churchly power), suggest the figure of his celestial namesake, whose white robe one could imagine changed to the dark habit, in keeping with the pall of sorrow, of the earth earthy, contrasting with that unknown peace, of the heaven heavenly.

But again I am wandering off in thought, as I used to do in fact, during the summer I spent at my little haunt, to which I had run off during the heated term, when the pavements reek the heat which the blazing sun pours down. Ah, then how you pine for the breeze of the stream, and the scent of wild woods and fragrant flowers, and the loll in lush grass, and the *dolce far niente* of uncubused life.

Paris may be a paradise, as all think who have not lived there. Perhaps it is, in winter; but in summer it can be a very Mahometan paradise—hot as can well be, and where, if you travel through the artists' quarters, you see many

Roman-togaed figures, enough to save you extra trouble in running around to search for models, which the painters thus themselves furnish, though, unfortunately, they cannot combine the two functions of seer and seen. Well, when I reached St. Patrouille, I settled down to the work of resting. I made the *cure's* acquaintance. He was Catholic, I was Protestant. Bah! human nature, at least, is catholic. We played, with Monsieur le Médecin and do. le Notaire, to whom he introduced me, our little game of écarté, and whiled away our evenings. My friendship with the priest ripened fast. It does not take men long to judge each other. I soon saw he had a shadow on his life, but was the man to tell it only to few, and that not one of his parishioners knew that his was other than the life of any well-liked, faithful and, withal, superior-minded Father. I accompanied him in his visits to the surrounding district. On one of them he brought me to a *chaumière*, within which lay a sick man. The conscious gleam in his eyes at the priest's entrance revealed to me a subtle link, of which they held the clasp. During the weeks that followed, while the invalid drew near death, we often watched by his bedside, and, finally, as he leaned back one day, he made a sign towards the *dressoir*, whose polished panels reflected the scrupulous neatness of the room, a characteristic of the cottage of the French peasant as well as the English rustic. The priest followed his gaze, and, finding the hidden spring, took out a locket. Opening it, he started visibly, and then thanked the dying man. Weeks of the closest intimacy, and the favoring circumstances of loneliness, had ripened our friendship into the heartiest sympathy, and his character had become revealed more and more to me as that of a soul in which was inherent the highest nobleness. Nor at this opportunity was my regard unreciprocated. The priest turned to me and said:

"Each life has its hidden though not unguessed background. I know you have divined in me circumstances

differing from my present ones, and rightly. This locket revives memories as dead as that poor man, who alone knew my history. Eleven years ago, as my friends who knew me could tell you, Gabriel Marie de Pontartois was gay, epicurean and courted, liked by men, loved by women. He thought several times that he, in turn, loved, and found he was mistaken. But there came at last across his path the social flower of the season, and he bent with the multitude to do it honor and homage. La Princesse Loidane you, a resident of Paris, need not to have described, for you have heard of her. My birth equaled hers, our families were agreed, and, foolishly sure, I lived in happiness. But things changed. Traget, the handsome, rich, dangerous society idol, supplanted me. The blow was severe. But my one thought was not to re-establish myself, but save her. You may remember the murdered man's body found at that time, Rue de la Petite Loge, No. 4. The mystery was never cleared. But I know its details. If you recall it, the Rue is a *cul-de-sac*. On its north side tall buildings, in which are small shops. There was a high wall opposite. I had gone to see an old dependent who had a small jewelry shop. He was out. While I stood in a window gazing out, a carriage passed, and my former betrothed leaned out. For two hours it passed and repassed, and every time the white face peered out, frightened because of its waiting in vain. My window opened at the side, and commanded a like one in No. 4. Turning, I saw Traget steal up to his man, a secret money-lender, and stab him. The victim turned, and, drawing a dagger, gashed his assailant's face. But he then fell, and Traget stabbed him to death. A frenzy came over me. I leaped to the window and looked out. I must have seemed mad, and my sudden appearance caused the Princess to swoon. So did I, with the double tension I had gone through. I revived when the jeweler returned, and told him, enjoining a secrecy, which he kept to his death to-day. He found this locket, which the Princess had dropped in the street,

and gave it to me. That night Traget, who represented his cut face as the result of a duel, eloped with the Princess, and her happiness sealed my lips. The shock gave me a fever, in which they told me I raved and shrieked murder. When I recovered, a true penitence for youthful follies and the bitterness of disappointment, together with the utter vacancy of heart, ending in deadness of feeling, caused me to seek refuge in that great healer of all woes, the church. There I lost my individuality. My parents died, and I came out to this spot, where ministering to others has utterly driven out all past longing and feeling."

The priest finished his simple and yet, to me, suggestive and stirring story, which drew me closer in friendly sympathy to him. We resumed our respective modes of life. Some weeks after, a party arrived *en route* to one of the castles in the vicinity. Stopping over Sunday, they went to the mass in the parish church, coming in late. As the priest, at its close, lifted the host and turned to the waiting assembly, a cry, agonizing, despairing and pathetic, rang out. The priest shook. A strong convulsive shudder passed over him. His lips trembled, but by a great effort he finished the service. Then he stepped into the vestry, where the lady of the party had been taken. At a sign the others retired. The Princess Traget-Loidane, now a widow, looked up and said:

"After many years, I have at last found you. I murdered true love to marry a murderer, and have born the sorrow which I made you suffer, in my ignorance of you and your worth." "A sorrow which," answered the priest, "I thought dead, but feel living anew, and that will live while I live." And then he passed out. And as the years have passed also, and from time to time I have seen him serene in face, though the lines have deepened, but seared in heart, I have learned to love him more as our lives ran on, and to look upon him as a Father in faith, a brother in feeling, and a type of many a nineteenth-century Christian martyr.

Fragments.

DEEPS.

AS THERE are stars that in the depths of sky
Are far beyond the reach of mortal eye;
So thoughts there are, that in the souls of men
Lie fathomless to any poet's ken.

ON AN OLD BOOK OF PLAYS.

From the musty quarto pages,
Brown, black-lettered, vellum bound,
Title dim with dust of ages,
Corners of the leaves worn round,
Comes there forth a faint aroma,
Sweet as was the Indic soma,
Drunk by gods from cups of gold—
Drunk by Vedic gods of old.

Tennyson's Later Poetry.

TO ALL lovers of Lord Tennyson's poetry and admirers of his genius, the last volume of his poems is of great interest, from the fact that it shows how far the poet can change his style and treatment to meet the demands of a changing taste. These later poems are widely different from any of the Laureate's previous work. There is an evident spirit of compromise in them, born of a consciousness of waning popularity: he is manifestly trying to conciliate his audience by concessions to the Browning school, many of its best characteristics appearing in his work.

The new volume shows another thing very gratifying to his admirers, namely, that the usual decline of poetic genius with advancing years has somehow escaped Tennyson. His imagination has lost none of its strength, his expression none of its facility, his verse none of its rhythmic flow, his

sympathy with nature none of its tenderness; in short, he is still the prince of Idyllists supreme and absolute. The "honors showered thick upon him" have not corrupted his genius, as many disciples of a blatant democracy prophesied and hoped they would. He will go down into old age no "driveller and a show," though he may have to lament with Cato Major: "It is a hard thing, Romans, to render an account unto a generation different from that in which one has lived."

One of the first things to be noticed in the Laureate's later work is an infusion of the dramatic element. Heretofore this has been the weak point in his armor, exposing him to the attack of every hostile critic. With the Idyllic power of Theocritus, the stateliness of Homer, and, when he chose to exercise it, the sprightliness of Horace, he was lacking in the "life of action." His characters were cold statuesque ideals of his own, and followed out preconceived lines of action, so that, given the person and the emergency, you could predict just what would be the event. His attempts at drama were conspicuous failures—"still-born," some one has happily designated them. They are about as dramatic as Mr. Freeman's History of the Norman Conquest. In them he is out of his element, and evidently forcing his genius to an unnatural bent.

In his very recent work, however, he has introduced the dramatic element with marked success. The deep, sad notes which he strikes in "Despair," are tragic in their intensity. A man and his wife lost in a maze of unbelief and utterly sick of this world, plunge together into "the eternal silence;" but the man is rescued from the intended suicide by the minister of the sect he had abandoned. Cursing the pious man for saving his life, he breaks out with the touching story of the last farewell between himself and his wife. Can anything be more hopelessly despairing than the lines:

"Lightly step over the sands! the waters—you hear them call!
 Life, with its anguish and horrors and errors—away with it all!"
 And she laid her hand in my own—she was always loyal and sweet—
 Till the points of the foam in the dusk came playing about our feet.
 'Ah God!' though I felt as I spoke I was taking the name in vain.
 Ah God! and we turned to each other, we kissed, we embraced, she and I,
 Knowing the love we were used to believe everlasting would die.

* * * * *
 'Dear love, forever and ever, forever and ever farewell.'
 Never a cry so desolate, not since the world began,
 Never a kiss so sad, no, not since the coming of man!"

But no quotation can do it justice, the poem must be read in its entirety to be appreciated. It is deep and dramatic—a tragedy of the soul—a very triumph of pessimism.

Another little poem which is full of passion is the one called "The Flight." The subject is somewhat thread-bare, and the verse, in places, has a disagreeable sing-song motion. A young girl is about to be sacrificed to the avarice of a father—

"A godless Jephtha vowing his child to one cast of the dice."

She loves a poor sailor, but in order to bolster up the falling fortunes of her family, is to wed a rich nobleman, whom she detests. Rather than be false to her love, she determines to "wander forth forlorn." This is the outline of the poem, and is one that has grown familiar to novel-readers. The poem itself is of little worth, except to show that the poet can be dramatic. There is, however, in it much of that scenic effect and landscape-harmony so characteristic of Tennyson. For example, on the morning of the day appointed for her marriage, the distracted girl laments to her sister:

"I envied your sweet slumber, all night so calm you lay,
 The night was calm, the morn is calm, and like another day;
 But I could wish yon moaning sea would rise and burst the shore,
 And such a whirlwind blow these woods as never blew before.

For one by one the stars went down across the gleaming pane,
And project after project rose, and all of them were vain;
The black-thorn blossom fades, and falls, and leaves the bitter sloe,
The hope I catch at vanishes, and youth is turned to woe."

An essential piece of the dramatist's mental equipment, and he is a great dramatist, indeed, who can afford to be without it, is the power of individualizing. This element of individuality or personality enters largely into all modern literature, and the popularity of the modern realistic novel fully attests the high price put upon it by the reading public. This element is conspicuously absent from Tennyson's earlier poems, and in them a private and distinct personality is rarely, if ever, drawn. His characters are not embodiments, but dis embodiments; they lack "selfness," if you will pardon a term borrowed from philosophy,

"The main miracle that thou art thou,
With power on thine act and on the world."

Arthur is personified virtue, Lancelot virtue slightly diluted, Guinevere beauty, and so on, each character representing some abstract quality viewed subjectively. In his later work, however, he makes very frequent use of personality, giving us such productions as "The Northern Farmer," and "The Spinster's Sweet-arts." In the former, ideas of death and judgment are strangely mixed up with solicitude for the future welfare of the Squire's fields, and the old farmer seems to cast a few doubts upon the policy of Providence, in the lines:

"Do Godamoighty know what 'a's doin' a taäken o' mea?
I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beäin and yonder a pea;
An' Squire will be sa mad, an' all a' dear, a' dear!
And I 'a managed for Squire coom Michaelmas, thutty year."

These thoughts and feelings are intensely individual—they are parts of a distinct personality. In the latter poem the aged spinster entangles cats and lovers in an inextricable

confusion, applying indiscriminately cat-epithets to lovers, and lover-epithets to cats. Yet it makes her individuality all the more romantic. In the short poem called "The Wreck," there is enough of this quality of which we have been speaking to furnish material for a striking novel. Although the "heroine," we will call her, does not elaborate very beautifully the Tennysonian conception of woman's sphere, nevertheless she is a real flesh-and-blood woman and not a personification of sin or remorse in the abstract. In the "Princess," Ida is a conception of ideal womanhood—Goëthe's "*Ewig weibliche*"; but this woman is individual, distinct from other women. Her griefs are her own, not those of womankind in general.

The only notable one of Tennyson's later poems which remains for us to consider is that which has christened his lately published volume, "Tiresias." It is an exquisite bit of a classical idyll, founded on the well-known story of Tiresias' blindness. How the seer, on accidentally beholding the goddess Athene somewhat *en dishabille* from her morning bath, was struck blind for his presumption, with the added curse that his warnings to his countrymen should always be in vain.

The poem shows Tennyson in his best style, and brings out his most exquisite beauties. We cannot forbear quoting a few lines :

"There, in a secret olive-glade, I saw
Pallas Athene climbing from the bath
In anger; yet one glittering foot disturbed
The lucid well; one snowy knee was prest
Against the margin flowers; a dreadful light
Came from her golden hair, her golden helm,
And all her golden armor on the grass,
And from her virgin breast, and virgin eyes
Remaining fixt on mine, till mine grew dark
Forever, and I heard a voice that said,
'Henceforth be blind, for thou hast seen too much,
And speak the truth that no man may believe.'"

The whole picture is eminently Greek; the poet seems to have caught the manner and spirit of Theocritus, and added to them the indescribable charm of his own versification. The landscape, too, is Greek, and many of the expressions are classical, for instance:

"One naked peak, the sister of the sun,
Would climb from out the dark and linger there
To silver all the valleys with her shafts."

"All the lands that lie
Subjected to the Heliconian ridge."

"Five fold thy term of years."

The style of Tennyson's poetry shows little change; there is still the same condensation and beauty of form which makes every verse of it sparkle like a many-faceted gem. A tendency to alliteration is observable, which may be due to the study of pre-Chaucerian poets, or may be a concession to a changing public taste. His verse is, in places, a little more after Browning's style, but, on the whole, is little changed. Whatever vagaries popular taste may indulge in, it is safe to predict that Tennyson will always be regarded as the great representative poet of his age, and will always be read where pure English is loved and spoken.

A Quandary.

Which shall it be? I cannot tell,
Ballade, chant-royal or triolet,
Rondel or rondeau or villanelle?

For sprightliness, triolets answer well;
But flash! and the short-lived glory's set.
Which shall it be? I cannot tell.

In stateliness, ballade and chant so excel
That their lovers in loyalty seem to forget
Rondel and rondeau and villanelle.

And the rondel is sad ; it's rhythmic swell
Moans ever and ever of vain regret—
Which shall it be ? I cannot tell.

The rondeau's inconstant ; a marriage bell,
A paean, a dirge ; I'm bothered yet,
Rondel or rondeau or villanelle ?

Which is the best when rhymes rebel,
And over intractable meters I sweat,
Rondel or rondeau or villanelle ?
Which shall it be ? I cannot tell.

A Rustic Chapter.

"WELL, I'll bet there ain't a lot of prettier girls nowhere than there is right about Richland ! Why, there's Eva Hall, and Jessie Stout, and Ella Black, and Nan Baker—I tell you she's a daisy ; but there aint any of 'em wot can hold a candle to Emma Gray. What you talkin' about anyhow, John, when you say the girls about Litterberry are better lookin' than ours ? They may squander more cash on duds, but you bet our girls are just about right in my eyes."

So spoke Sam Johnson, an honest young farmer, to his fellow cultivator of the soil, John Beard, as they sat whittling away on some pine sticks in front of the only store in the little village of Richland, in the central part of Illinois.

Who hasn't seen a Western country store ? Well, take a wooden structure forty feet by twenty, put a wooden counter on each side, and stock it with groceries, dry goods, boots and shoes, cigars and tobacco and patent medicines, in short, with a little of everything, and that everything rather dingy and fly-specked from having laid on the shelves too long ; add a few rickety chairs or benches to the space outside the counters, and stick half a dozen wooden pigeon-

holes in amongst the candy and tobacco for holding the mail—for a country store is always a post office too—and you have the thing complete. You might think it the last place in the world for philosophy, but just take a seat by the fire some winter's night, and you will hear enough predictions about the weather and the price of crops, and enough comment on the rashness and foolishness of congress to make you believe that you really have found a band of seers, and, to hear them farther, the only band of seers in the world, and if this government would only obey their dictations, there would be no trouble or complaints amongst its citizens.

But to go back to our conversation. It took place one evening in July, when it was the custom for the farmers to assemble at the store before the arrival of the evening mail. It was the season of the year after harvest was over, and, as but few now stacked their grain, nearly all were idle, and they loved to get together and chew tobacco, and talk about their crops and prospects while they sat on goods-boxes and whittled, or engaged in the manly sport of "pitching horse-shoes."

On this particular evening in July, John Beard and Sam Johnson were the principals in a group of farmers and farm hands, clad, almost to a man, in well-worn overalls, stuck into the tops of equally well-worn boots, and in colored cotton shirts, without coat or vest, and with broad-brimmed, dirty felt or straw hats on their heads, though, to save your life, you couldn't tell why they wore the brims so broad, for every face was as tanned and brown as the sun could make it. Gossip had turned upon a party that had been held a few evenings before, at the neighboring town of Literberry, and to which some of the Richland leaders of society had been invited. It was evident that John Beard had been smitten with some fair damsel there, or his remarks would not have called forth the speech of Sam Johnson before recorded.

One thing is certain, and that is that Sam had the crowd on his side; for who isn't proud of the beauty of his own locality? and who ever went into a new place and was not told, inside of fifteen minutes, that it had more pretty girls in it than any place of its size in the world? And a sound doctrine that is, too, to hold up for your own neighbors and locality.

Sam had the lead in the conversation, and he went on:

"Speakin' of Emma Gray—now ain't that a fine family of theirs? and peculiar like, too? Now, there's the old man, John, and the old woman, Mary,—they say they were engaged to be married when they were mere children, back in Jersey. And, I tell you, the old lady is mighty jealous still of John out of her sight. But I was speakin' of the children. There is Emma and Will, they say they are both follerin' right in the track of the old folks, as regards gettin' married. Now Will, he's only nineteen, but he and Nan Baker have always liked one another, ever since they were little tots, and went to school together to old John Full; and Emma, she's only seventeen, but they say she's dead gone on that Angel boy, and can't even bear for him to throw paper wads in school at any other girl. Well, I guess it is all right, only it is kinder queer, how children will do as their parents did before them in such matters."

At this point in his discourse the train whistled, and all got up from their boxes and sauntered slouchily across to the depot platform. In the West you never pass a country station but what you see a full delegation of the rough-visaged, hard-fisted, sunburnt inhabitants assembled there in all their glory, evidently thinking it is their duty to represent the community.

After the laborious process of distributing the mail, consisting of a dozen or so letters and as many weekly papers, was over, the delegation mounted their wagons or horses and trotted off home to supper and to bed; for a farmer, you know, thinks it is a sin to stay up after nine o'clock at most.

While this band of gossipers was dispersing from its loafing place, and, in the early shades of evening, each taking his homeward way through the dusty lanes, filled on either side of the beaten track with rank growths of "dog-fennel" and "rag-weeds," Tom Angel, who lived some four or five miles from the village, and whose father was preacher as well as farmer, was donning his best suit of clothes, after having curried, saddled and bridled his favorite riding horse. He was a handsome, sunburnt lad of nineteen or twenty summers, and when he came forth in his best frock-coat, and boots without blacking, to show that they were new, and with a standing collar, opening wide in front around his neck, and a fresh white shirt on, made all the more prominent by the absence of a neck-tie, and with a black, soft felt hat on his head, he showed himself to be a man, and surely he felt like one, as he rode towards the farm-house of the Grays.

What did he care if the dust did show on his garments? He had a good colt, and he was going to prove it to all who saw him on the road, and so, enveloped in a cloud of earth, he galloped on over the level ground, with only the golden wheat-stubble and verdant hedge-rows to call forth his admiration of nature, until he came to the narrow lane which led up to the Gray farm.

It is needless to say, after the report of the speech made by Sam Johnson, that he was bent on seeing his so-called "best girl," who was at that very moment engaged in playing a game of croquet with her brother Will, her little sister and the hired hand, for the farmers in the West, for the most part, have so spoiled their help that they think they must be treated exactly as one of the family.

The Gray house was a typical one in some respects. It was cosily situated in a grove of tall locust trees, which always looked ragged except in the spring, when their fragrant wax-like blossoms of white made a rich harvest for all the bees for miles around. But even then, the trouble it

took to keep the fallen clusters from tainting the water in the open wells more than counterbalanced their beauty. Well, in the midst of this locust grove stood the farm house, a tall, two-story-and-a-half structure, with old-fashioned, dormer windows in the attic. One end was set towards the road, and along the whole breadth of one side ran a wide veranda or porch. In front of this porch, within a few paces of it, were situated an old blacksmith shop, smoke-house and chicken-house, and under the long row of cherry trees, which formed an avenue of shade out of the drive to the barn, were always standing two or three farm wagons, corn planters and various other articles of farm machinery. The barn was almost as large as the house, and the surrounding stock-sheds and granaries gave the whole place the appearance of a little village. Then back of the barn was a huge orchard, and many a heart was gladdened with its fruit in the long winter months, when the farmers and their families gathered in peaceful luxury around the blazing fire-place. Who hasn't tasted apples fresh from the farmer's cellar has a rare treat before him.

John Gray had never been happier than he was on that evening in July, as he was seated, thrown back in his chair on his long porch, smoking his after-supper pipe, and dreaming of the money he would make off his plentiful harvest and young, growing stock, and planning for the fall plowing and weed cutting in the corn. When you ponder over your future profession and build air-castles about becoming great at the bar or in the pulpit, or rich in the counting-house, do you ever think of the independent farmer and his honest occupation?

The sound of galloping hoofs arrested the attention of Emma Gray as she made her last winning stroke at the striped stake and waved her mallet above her head with a little shout of triumph. At the very first glance, you could but agree with Sam Johnson in his opinion of her, for she was as shapely and as pretty a girl of seventeen as ever

graced a state dinner, though she knew it not, nor did her friends appreciate her beauty. Her complexion was clear and fair, and her eyes dark brown, and her hair was of that lustrous shade of brown that told it had been golden once. Standing there in the old farm-yard in the fading twilight, with graceful pose and longing eyes bent on her young hero riding up at full speed, she would have made a picture wonderfully fair.

"I beat them, Tom," was her salutation, and it covered his face with a wreath of smiles, as he dismounted and tied his horse to the old pole hitching-rack. He was a bashful lad in her presence, but his face couldn't hide his true feelings.

"Come join us," she added merrily; "we can play just one more game—and mind, Tom, if I beat you, you have to take me buggy riding next Sunday."

Tom could but assent, as he planned how he could lose and where he could borrow the right kind of a vehicle.

But that is neither here nor there. Will Gray said he must leave, and the little sister and hired man followed, leaving Tom and Emma to themselves. The game went on, almost by moonlight now, and the click of the balls and a merry laugh now and then were all the sounds from them audible to farmer Gray, as he sat on the porch and listened to the songs of the katydids and crickets; and when the two lovers stepped onto the porch they aroused him from a sound sleep. After shaking hands with the lad and asking about the family and the crops he left the pair alone.

They were in love with one another, that was plain; they always had been, at school, and Tom had thought many times to tell Emma of how he longed to have her with him some day, but he knew not how to go about it. Like many another, his courage failed when the time came, and so it was their wont to sit in silent admiration of one another for hours at a time. The moon was just above the old tree-tops and looking down affectionately upon the youthful pair,

but even she could not screw Tom's courage to the sticking point. Emma had been fumbling a handkerchief in her nervous hands, and now Tom reached over to grasp one end of it, thinking to at least relieve the monotony. In doing so he clasped her slender hand. She did not draw it away. He bent over farther, and looking up into her bright face, said the simple words, "Emma, I do *like* you so well." That was all, but his heart went with them.

It was later than usual when Will Gray rode into the yard, for he had been to see Nan Baker; but Tom Angel's horse was still standing at the hitching-rack. He did not disturb the happy pair, but went to his own room to dream happy dreams, for now there was an understanding, too, between himself and Nan.

Five summers passed away and found no decided change in the country about Richland, nor in the people, only some were richer, some were poorer, and many renters had moved away and new ones taken their places. Boys who were too small then, save to carry water or bunch bundles in the harvest, and to drive up the cows from the pasture, had grown to be men and were doing men's work at plowing and seeding. Little misses, whose sole occupation then had been to feed the chickens, had grown to be fair maidens, strong and full of healthful beauty. Mere infants then were now trudging to and from the old country school-house, and who do you think now presided in that wondrous seat of learning? None other than pretty Emma Gray. Most of the old families were still there, but the Angels had moved away four years before, to a town some fifty miles away, where the father devoted his whole attention to the pulpit. Tom had taken advantage of the golden opportunity the town afforded and attended business college, and was now a full-fledged grocery clerk and book-keeper.

Emma still heard from him, and although his letters were plain and simple, they were all in all to her as she faithfully performed her daily duties. Her beauty was fading a little;

her eyes were not quite so bright, and a thoughtful expression was ever on her face. Could it be that her lover was getting less attentive? Or was it only her hereditary jealousy and fretfulness at being separated from him?

The most noticeable and important change to the community that had taken place during the five years, was that of the proprietorship of the country store. A year before, Will Gray had bought out the whole stock and assumed the position of master of ceremonies in all the debates and discussions that took place within its walls, and had duly received his commission from the government as P. M. at Richland, Illinois. A month later he had married Nan Baker, and they were now happily dwelling in a small house in the village, with two or three rooms in it, but proud to say they owned it all, and they talked boastingly to visitors of how they hoped to soon add another room, and to trade their organ for a piano.

Talk about love—don't look for it in the palace or in the hovel, but in the bright, cheerful homes of our simple country people. They know not what fashion is. In their own circle they are as good as the best, and so, totally oblivious of the throbbing world beyond, they live on in peace and happiness. Such was the married life of Will Gray and Nan Baker.

As I said before, five summers had passed away, and now even to a day. Emma Gray was resting her mind through the long vacation by helping her mother with the housework, and she never dusted a chair or baked a pie but what she thought "I wonder if Tom would like that." This evening she was sitting on the porch reading "Evangeline" and thinking how sad it was, and trying to imagine the old locusts waving hemlocks; and then her mind went back five years to that evening when Tom had come and played croquet with her, and how simply he had told his love for her, and how happy they had been, and then how hard it was to have him leave her, and now how strange for her to be

a school-mistress, when brother Will was married and so happy. In such a frame of mind she saw the train go past. Could she hope that Tom might be on it!

Half an hour afterwards her father brought her a letter. It was from Tom. She knew his handwriting so well, and her hands trembled to open it. When they did, she read a simple note saying :

EMMA,

I thought I loved you, but I was mistaken. Another has come between us. I can say no more.

TOM ANGEL.

She neither fainted nor wept aloud, but who shall ever know the pang her heart received? Who shall requite the wrong?

Voices.

Our Motto.

Place—Pres. Witherspoon's Library. *Time*—1773. *Occasion*—Examination of entering students.

MAJESTIC in mien, the Doctor sat at one extremity of a long study-table. His powdered wig fell gracefully about his shoulders, which were covered with his clerical robe. A large Scotch Bible lay upon the table on his right, while at his left side were a Latin and Greek grammar and the Elements of Mathematics.

The room was filled with lads clad in homespun clothes. Some were of sturdy frame, with brave and manly countenances, while others were delicately effeminate, and their faces betrayed an inward longing for the scenes of their childhood. Presently the dignified Doctor rose, placed his hand upon the Bible which had been his solace in old Scotland, and then invoked the Lord's blessing. He then turned to the first boy upon his left. The boy was a great gawky Jerseyman from the Northern part of the colony. The President questioned him closely, and, finding him deficient in Greek, conditioned him. The next lad showed some proficiency in the languages, but had not mastered the "Rule of Three." He was also admitted with conditions. The Doctor next turned to a lad upon his right. Then arose before him a young man of medium stature, with a broad forehead and a clear, expressive eye. He answered the questions put to him with rapidity and ease. The Doctor found it impossible to trip him, and, after complimenting him, admitted him to the college. The young man bowed courteously, and thanked him. He then asked the President how long it would take to complete the course. "Four years, by all means," replied the Scotch

divine. "But," said the youth, "can I not receive my diploma if I do my work efficiently and complete the whole course in two years?" This question nettled the aged Scotchman. He drew himself up, shook his head, and, with a characteristic brogue, said, "Conservatism is the text on which this college has been run, is run, and ever shall be. The young man who does not go through Princeton College in the regular way shall not go through it at all." His sensitive nature, stung by these words, recoiled, and Alexander Hamilton turned upon his heel, left the portals of the President's house, and directed his journeyings to Columbia College. That institution now enrolls among its graduates the name of the illustrious statesman.

Time has stained the marble on the old Doctor's grave, but the spirit of intense conservatism is with us still, else had our professional losses been less, and more names might now be enrolled upon the records of Princeton College.

College Men in Life.

A WRITER in a recent number of *Lippincott's Magazine* argues with some force against a college education, since it does not "tend to aid a business-man in earning his livelihood."

It is a familiar and almost a universal fact that but few men attain marked success in business life, while the greater number of those who embark in it drop out sooner or later, either failing completely or contenting themselves with meagre salaries. In other words, it is a condition of the human kind in their business strife that few succeed, while many fail. Among these latter ones a remarkably large number of college men find their unexpected and unhappy place. Now, is this due to the mismanagement and miscalculation incident to human nature, or is it, as the above

writer unqualifiedly affirms, the unfortunate proceeds of a cultured mind?

The said writer compares the trained intellect to a fine tool, whose very fineness is a bar to its usefulness, in that it cannot do the coarse work in the everyday rounds of ordinary business or commercial life. "There are," he says, "a thousand contingencies in the store, the warehouse, the shop and the counting-room, wherein the average cultured mind finds itself out of place. Too generally it regards the work as beneath it, as common-place and uninteresting, often positively irksome or absolutely painful." These statements—and they do contain an element of truth—have thereupon led him to the conclusion that a college course is so much time worse than thrown away. This we deem the most skeptical and near-sighted tenet of an overcharged utilitarianism.

What is due partly to refinement, but mostly to misjudgment and irritable and restless human nature, is attributed solely to the former. The repugnance to minor details at the beginning of business life certainly is a drawback, but it is not the prime element of success or failure. Thus the argument against a college education on these grounds is one founded on a two-fold exaggeration.

On the other hand, let not the college be too confident in her long-established ways. "Culture for culture's sake" is the old idea and a happy dictum, but with this in view the college course becomes in great part a luxury, so far as its preparation for business is concerned. Should not the increasing demand of the times, the changing relations between the professions and the community at large, the closer competition in professional life, the extreme practical bearing of all intellectual pursuits, should not these induce the college to leave the Senior year, if not the Junior, almost entirely free to electives, and at the same time give both the quantity and quality of the more practical courses greater attention?

It is true that a college course has its drawbacks, so that they sometimes aggregate a sufficient force to render success difficult, or even to preclude it. Among these are the "high expectation which the expense and elaboration of a college course naturally create in the minds of parent and guardians." We may also add the high expectation of the student himself, and the consequent inability to bear small reverses, when the road lengthens out and success takes weary plodding.

Too little practical knowledge, together with too much theoretical, often leads the mind into an artificial state; he misjudges the dignity of the more humble pursuits, magnifies his own ability, and concludes to become a great lawyer, a renowned surgeon, a literary critic, a merchant, or something else for which he is equally unqualified, and at which he will make an equally egregious failure. This mischoice of a profession is the great bane of business life and the source of so much failure.

Again, during the four years which the student must spend at college, his less cultured rivals are steadily climbing in their business ahead of him, and are putting all this time directly to their credit. This advantage is, however, only a temporary one.

Leaving out of account mental training, which in other spheres is certainly of enormous value, but which neither greatly helps nor hinders a man in many branches of business, let us see in what other ways the college course does directly advance "the bread-and-butter side of business life."

If a journalist, then, as one writer says, "The best school of journalism in the world is the editorial board of a college journal. In one sense this is misleading, since college journalism does not directly qualify a man for practical newspaper work, but rather gives him that thorough training in English composition which the college itself does not give but which is of the utmost importance at the very outset of such a career. Moreover, we can not see how an editor

could escape making grievous errors in treating the more profound questions in his profession without a good and reliable education.

If a lawyer or a public man, then the college literary and debating societies give a drill in parliamentary usage, in oratory, in extemporaneous speaking and debating, which could hardly be obtained elsewhere. This is clearly proven by the number of eminent public men who have graduated from those colleges where these societies are most prosperous.

If one have the natural endowments for a literary career, then it must certainly be admitted that a college education is preëminently essential. He might attain distinction without this education, as others have done, but a refined mind would be to genius a perennial source of higher morals and tempered understanding. What would Matthew Arnold be without a cultured mind?

Again, in whatever line of intellectual pursuits a man may engage, he will find himself at once reinforced by the habits of close application and methods of study acquired at college. The contact with eminent professors makes their standard his standard, and the way of attaining it more clear.

The college is not a place of luxury and repose. There are so many little contingencies, and no less distasteful ones than those of the counting-room and the store. If these are neglected at college they may again gain the ascendancy in the affairs of business.

Lastly, the close competition among men at college, their divers relations and associations with each other, the diversity of character, the wide and various acquaintances, and these at a time when habits are forming and intuitions are quick, all these combine to give a man that knowledge and understanding of human nature which is a subtle talisman in all business relations.

These considerations, to say nothing of the higher benefits of a college course which are not reckoned in terms of utility, lead us to the conclusion that a college education is rarely a hindrance, but will materially aid the average man as well as the genius to gain that which the world calls success, while it will "add enormously to the finer pleasures of a prosperous career."

Public Lectures by Our Professors.

THE situation of Princeton, midway between the two great cities, New York and Philadelphia, ought to furnish her many advantages, and not least among them is the facility of obtaining lecturers. It seems, however, that we are not alive to our privilege. Noted men pass by us and receive no inducement to stop. If there is one line more than another, in which Princeton is deficient, it is the public lecture system. Scarcely a college, large or small, can be found in the country, which has so few public lectures as Princeton. Many other colleges have not only an established course given by men from abroad, but also lectures given by their own professors before the college at large. Examples of the latter system are Yale and Cornell. In each of these colleges the current topics of the day, political, social and literary, are discussed in public lectures by their professors. Now we see no adequate reason why such a plan should not be adopted here. Our need is greater from the fact that we are not situated in a city where other lecturers than those connected with the college are given. Some of our professors lecture away from here—why not here? There are many topics of the day, such as the Silver question, Socialism and the Indian Problem, which are not by any means foreign to the pre-

scribed course of the college, but which seem to be better suited for a public lecture than for class-room work.

To prove that such a course would be a success we have only to refer to the interest manifested in the Library Meetings, and particularly to the unusually large number of Seniors and Juniors who attended the last one to hear Prof. Ormond's paper on "Shakespeare as a Political Philosopher." Now, if lectures of this character were held in a public place, and thrown open to the college at large, it seems to us that one great step would be taken toward the desired end. This need not conflict in the least with the present system of Library Meetings. They can be restricted to the discussion of subjects more exclusively philosophical, subjects comprehensible and of interest only to the two higher classes, whose course they are intended to supplement.

Many advantages would be derived from the proposed scheme. There are many questions of which every student should have a deeper knowledge than can be gotten from a cursory glance, which is all that our time permits, at the daily papers and periodicals. A lecture on any of these subjects would serve the double purpose of creating and nourishing an interest among the students in prominent questions, and, at the same time, would furnish a basis for collateral reading and special study.

Furthermore, to know just where our professors stand in regard to such questions, for instance, as the "Silver Question," would be an advantage to the students. It would help us form and substantiate an opinion of our own.

Should this plan meet the approval of the faculty, we hope that even the present dull season may be enlivened by at least a few lectures from those professors who would be willing to deliver here those lectures which they give abroad.

J. W. Q.

Editorials.

ONLY one more issue remains before another LIT. board is chosen. We take this last opportunity of calling the attention of contributors to the fact that with that issue also closes the competition for the prize of \$20.00 for the best series of contributions published throughout the year. Remember that quality will be our standard, and don't despair because of the lateness of the hour.

WE TAKE the opportunity here to call the attention of our readers to the new department we have added to the LIT. called "Books," and would further say that it deserves the attention of all. A choice number of late publications are reviewed in this number, and a careful reading of the department can scarce fail to prove of valuable assistance to those who are anxious to add interesting and valuable works to their libraries. And even if you cannot afford to invest in some, or all of them, you will find the department always a valuable guide to your general reading, and, on that account alone, well worthy of your careful perusal.

Monday Morning Recitations.

OF LATE there has been more or less grumbling on the part of the upper-classmen in regard to recitations which have been imposed upon them early Monday mornings. Without going into details we may say that the main argument against such a system is, that the student who works

hard all the week, naturally and in accordance with the laws of health, rebels against working on text-books Saturday. We cannot but think he is right, but under the present system he must either prepare the lesson with an ill will Saturday night, "poll" on Sunday or take a zero for his independence. When lectures can be given just as well, we think a request for doing away with recitations on the first hour of Monday mornings should not pass unheeded.

The Lit. Prizes.

NO OTHER college magazine, so far as we can learn, can compare with the NASSAU LIT. in the liberality of its prize system. We have awarded, this year, two cash prizes of \$20 each, and two of \$10 each, for excellence in essay, story, sketch and poetry writing, and we have yet to award a prize of \$20 for the best series of contributions published throughout the year. Surely no one can call us stingy.

We have no reason to complain of the quality of the contributions that have been handed us, but we do think that a larger number should have competed for these very liberal premiums. We fear that only a few appreciate the advantage they have in having a prize offered for every style of writing. When such large prizes were offered it was with the view of calling as many as possible into the field of competition for them; but if the students at large cannot appreciate our liberality, we cannot but advise our successors to decrease the amount of money, if not the number of prizes, they may offer to contributors.

" *The Rivals*."

WE SINCERELY hope that the Dramatic Association will meet with the encouragement and the success which its management deserves. Like every other project in college, it is liable to be criticised, and this in no kindly spirit. Its officers most certainly are to be commended for the energy they have displayed, and, even if the presentation of the "Rivals" should not be quite as successful as that of "She Stoops to Conquer," their efforts ought to receive due appreciation.

Although the "School for Scandal," judged from a literary standpoint, shows more real merit, the "Rivals" is more characteristic of its author, both in its composition and dramatic purpose. Sheridan's chief aim in his dramatic works seems to have been never for one instant to permit the interest to flag. To accomplish this he has sought to lighten the action of his plays, and introduced an almost continuous stream of witticism. His comedies are amusing, but lack real force. They are intended to amuse without any very hard blows aimed at contemporary society.

The Importance of English Criticism.

PROF. HUNT pleads for an "equal academic value" of the study of English in most excellent style and commendable manner, in an article printed in the *New Englander and Yale Review* for February. He is thoroughly in earnest in the matter, and no fair-minded man can help from agreeing with him when he says there is no other department in a college curriculum more in need of "Collegiate Service Reform." He advocates as a remedy more English in the preparatory schools, and, consequently, a much higher requirement in that branch for admittance to college. He says historical and phraseological study of the

language in the school should give way to a philosophical and philological study of it in the college, and that there it should be "critical and comprehensive in distinction from being merely chronological."

We think there are no more careful and painstaking professors in English to be found anywhere than in Princeton. But who of us has not felt our total inability, even after our English course is completed, to criticise with intelligence our standard authors? It is one thing to know the history of a writer, to be able to say you have read all of his productions, and another thing to pass judgment on them yourself. It is this critical ability we should strive for, and which it should be the aim of every college to impart to its students. When that is gained, and a power of expression has been acquired, we can then, for the first time, determine where we stand in relation to the world of the men of letters; and until it is made an important part of the college curriculum the world need not look to the colleges for literary men, for they give to their graduates no incentives, and leave them to work out their way alone, if they aspire, in any way, to literary honors.

Thackeray Once Again.

IT IS most certainly an interesting as well as most instructive fact to learn that a certain well-known publishing firm in New York, for the past two years has sold more of Thackeray's novels than any other works of fiction. This is most suggestive, as showing that the great interest manifested in Thackeray's works is still unabated, and, in fact, is steadily increasing.

A short time ago an individual, prompted by a motive of curiosity, wrote to a number of prominent authors in different fields of literature, asking them to name the novel which, in their estimation, had exerted the greatest force on society. A great number of different novels were named,

but the one which received the greatest number of mentions was Henry Esmond. Although mere statistics in a literary question seldom stand for very much, when we place side by side two such significant facts—one the expression of the opinion of the reading public, and the other the judgment of professionals in literature—we may be justified in forming some estimate of the power which Thackeray's novels still exert. Although the times have greatly changed since Thackeray died, most of the characters he has delineated find counterparts in the society of to-day. We are greatly amused at the rather rough handling the modern dude receives from *Puck* and *Life*, but yet the realistic touches which are apparent in the history of Barnes Newcome, "a young man of business, who never missed dressing for dinner, or was ever huddled over his toilet," have not lost all their sting. What "passes in society in the clubs, colleges, mess-rooms," in *Vanity Fair* and the *Newcomes*, is still being re-enacted from day to day.

The costumes that Jas. Sedley and Major Pendennis were accustomed to wear would appear strangely out of place to-day, but we almost daily gaze upon their counterparts in thought and deed.

Society has not changed so very much after all, and it does not follow to-day any more than it did when the *Newcomes* was written, "that all men are honest because they are poor," and we, too, have known some "who were friendly and generous, although they had plenty of money."

It is on account of this reality that the interest in Thackeray is increasing. He described human nature as he saw it, and although customs and social manners may have changed, human nature is the same. Nearly every one finds a story with a moral specially applicable to himself in some one of Thackeray's works. If perchance any of us have seen a Pendennis or a Barnes or Clive Newcome in our midst, we feel reasonably sure that Thackeray was correct when he said that "Philosophy does not pour out of the mouth of such a young gentleman."

Literary Gossip.

When daffodils begin to peer,
With heigh ! the doxy over the dale,
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year ;
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.

—THE WINTER'S TALE.

THE GOSSIP may be pardoned for venturing to speak a word on the subject of professions—not particularly about the choosing of one's future profession, for it must be admitted that that subject is considerably hackneyed—but simply to give some observations on the matter and to notice some of the aspects which the question presents to a college man.

Perhaps there is no other subject which so haunts a man through his college course as this, except he belong to that class of students who come to college with their mind already made up in regard to it. Even then one is very liable to become unsettled. The subject presents itself in a vastly different and much broader light than what it did in former years. A particular profession loses some of the charm and promise which it then had ; another assumes a fascination which it was never thought to possess. Probably the new light which one gets in regard to these professions, probably the fact that new fields of work present themselves, offering less competition, both have much to do with the general indecision and inability of students in making a choice. At any rate there is very much serious thought given to the matter, and one feels compelled to settle it definitely for the better or the worse before leaving college. Nor does the advice which one ordinarily gets help him to settle the question. The difficulty does not lie in not knowing what the promises are which the different professions hold out, but in determining just what measure of fitness he may have for each profession and in which one his chances for success are best.

Choosing a profession is at best taking a risk. The possibilities of each of the professions lie before us, and we have a shadowy conception of our own talent, we throw the dice of choice, and the result may be either success or failure.

To carry it into the realm of speculation, how many of us will, ere a decade has come and gone, be plodding on in the course which we have now chosen, as doctors, lawyers or men of business? Some of us feel very confident of the course which we intend to pursue, we have it planned even to the fees which we will exact and the enterprises which we will undertake, but I fancy these air-castles will receive many a shock in the practical world.

The number of college students who expect to do something in the way of literary work after they get out of college is remarkable. If one-half the number should pursue this intention to its realization the cynics who turn up their noses at college education would have no room in the future to cast it into the teeth of the colleges that they are not turning out the men of great literary fame. I do not know whether the collegians of a generation ago cherished the same desire, or whether this is a new-born spirit in our midst—an evidence that literature has added new charms and is offering richer prizes to her devotees. Certain it is that her devotees are numerous and confident to-day.

Now, this is certainly a very laudable ambition, and one that might be expected to be cherished in a classical atmosphere where the praises of men of letters are sung continually; but there is a certain air of gravity and assurance in the demeanor of these college aspirants for literary honors that is amusing, to say the least.

Here is Mr. A., who has written a poem and had it published in one of the college papers. It isn't much, as far as thought is concerned, and the metre is somewhat strained, to be sure, but these are things which study and age will overcome, and so he imagines he has a spark of poetic fire in his soul, and intends to devote part of his life to literature.

So Mr. B., whose essays have evinced decided literary ability and received a glowing criticism from the professor, he expects to study law, but only as a stepping-stone, of course, to literary life. And Mr. C., whose story received the prize, he, too, will cultivate the friendship of the Muses apart from professional duties. No doubt each one has in view some illustrious example which he will follow—a Dr. Holmes paying homage to the goddess of letters, amid the daily duties of his medical profession, or a Bryant singing of birds and forests and streams in the editorial sanctum. All this is very delightful dreaming, but what solid substance is there to it? How many of these individuals will turn to the Muses in the day of adversity? This is said to be the true test of literary genius.

"The stream of new literature keeps broadening and rising from month to month, without any marked change as regards quality," says a recent writer. It is enough to bewilder one to attempt to keep pace with the latest productions, let alone to read them. Any effort to do so must result in one's neglecting that which has stood the test. It seems strange that among all the works that are now being published, none stand out preëminent like those of Chas. Read and Thackeray, or Nathaniel Hawthorne, bearing the marks of great originality and permanent literary value. Perhaps there never was a time when there was more literary work done, or when there were more authors striving for recognition than there are at present. What wonder would it be if, amid the deluge of books and publications, some that have lasting merit should be overlooked for the present. After reading some of the

lighter and more recent productions it is a pleasure to turn to the pages of some of the older authors, to those of Dickens and Coleridge, or even to quaint old Richardson, whose tedious letter-novels would surely never bring him into popularity in this age. It is a good way to learn to estimate the literature of the present period, and then it prevents one from forming the habit of reading light literature altogether. One is at first disposed to wonder how some of the older authors came to be so famous, or what there is in their works to merit the praise which has been bestowed upon them, but a comparison with much that is being written at the present day will help to remove all difficulty on that question.

A writer in one of the weeklies gives the following description of a former Princeton man whose name is beginning to be familiar to magazine readers, Mr. Henderson, of the class of '76: "It seems like a profanation to call one whose delicate fancy conceived the pathetic sonnet 'Eve' in the December *Century* a funny man. At best there is a sneaking disdain felt by the public toward the mere humorist. He is to them always, more or less, a buffoon. They do not know that it is only by virtue of his delicate fancy that the man writes humorously. They do not feel that the circle of humor and pathos touch and overlap. Henderson is about thirty, blonde, good looking; writes stories for the best English magazines, fun for *Puck* and verses for everybody." I give it that the readers of the *LIT.* may be on the lookout for his verses, which are appearing almost constantly in the magazines. It will add to the pleasure which they may take in reading his stories and verses to know that he is a graduate of Old Nassau.

And so we have come to the last winter number, and the Gossip is beginning to look forward to the time, now not very far distant, when he shall have to lay aside his pen, and when some one else will occupy his chair and will gossip to you. It's a very pleasant position, this one of Gossip, not a very responsible one to be sure, and certainly not very influential, for nobody pays any attention to the talk of a professional dreamer. Some listen to him, of course, but only to laugh, and to learn what things are going on, but they don't attach any weight to what he says. There is a satisfaction sometimes, however, in being able to say unpleasant things about people and matters that you don't like, even if your remarks are blown aside as chaff; and that is a Gossip's deep delight, yea, that is the thought which is sweet and soothing to his soul.

Editor's Table.

OUR college friends are both more numerous and more entertaining this month. Probably from the old reason that midwinter is the time which offers best, opportunity for literary activity. What is especially noticeable are the views on college topics, and the good feeling prevalent (except in the little symptoms of editorial courtesy occasionally visible, as at Yale and its antipodes, some Western colleges). In our discussion a difficulty meets us at the start. We do not know whether to keep the best for the last or tell its name right off. There is no danger of our forgetting it. Well, we might just as well say it now. If there is a better magazine than the *Williams Lit.* among our exchanges, we have not yet found it. The opening "College Journalism" and "Sold to the Devil," are each, in their line, of the none-better style. So is "Chat." If we tell the whole truth, etc., we might (only might) say the articles were a trifle long. Still, it's only a hypothesis, and, if one or two break the rule, it does not mar the whole. The *Lit.* did not have to struggle. Its own qualities have carried it immediately to the crest, or pushed it to the front rank, whichever expression you may prefer. We regret only that we have not the proprietary right in our opinion. *C'est ce que tout le monde dit.* Though we would like to stop longer, other friends (we hope) call us away. The *Columbia Spectator*, bigarré in exterior and in an illustrated interior, is well conducted. We are glad to see, by the way, that it, in common with many others, does not misinterpret our attitude on the religious question as one of narrow-mindedness.

Among very sensible editorials on topics of general, as well as local interest, are those in the *Lafayette*, that of the *Washington-Jeffersonian*, on "Cribbing," and its article entitled "Sheep-Skin Below Par," all subjects which, while much discussed, are still of import and interest. As to wit (home-made), one of the clever skits is that of the *Concordiensis* in its "Summary of News," illustrating jottings, as in ex-college papers applied to college ones. But, talking of wit, we cannot pass by the *Record*. It gives more than the funny, and we can forgive an occasional "chestnut" when we think of the wear and tear of brain tissue and the moral deterioration that must ensue from such a course, which, perhaps, explains "Student Life at Yale." However, in this case, *Pro bono publico*. Guiltless ourselves, we yet will not cast the first stone. The *Yale Lit.* presents a very fine number. "Some Tendencies of College Education" is thoughtful and vigorous, as are the other essays. "Brad's Marie" shows the climacteric, soft but strong, we like to see in a story, while "Portfolio" is always quite a gem. With the *University Quarterly*

we can point a moral to which, no doubt, many of our friends will take exception, the baneful influence of fraternities by jealousy. Not that this hurts the *Quarterly* itself, but an uneasy state of college feeling reacts on its literature. We think the magazine, good otherwise, is laboring under a delusion by thinking to enhance its college value through the articles of its eminent instructors, even should the case be exceptional. The *Brunonian* has more on "Cribbing," suggested by an epidemic of semi-annuals, and an editorial where, quoting the *Yale News'* remark, "The reverses which Yale has met in the past year have fallen very heavily on the college, and it is only work of the steadiest and most regular kind that will regain for her her lost laurels," it says, in reference to the new early-chapel scheme: "We knew the defeat was crushing, but were not aware the consequences were so dire." "If" is a pretty poem.

The *Amherst Student*, midwinter dress, emphasizes the advantages of college-newspaper writing. So say we all of us. We await with expectancy our new colleague, the *Monthly*. We are glad to see that somebody misses us. Thanks, *Swarthmore Phoenix*. Perhaps we were selfishly engrossed with you and forgot to send ourselves. The *Cornell Review* is a good number, and well criticises the defects of the college school of periodicals. "Was Hawthorne a Pessimist?" is ably written, and so is the "Dickens and Thackeray," in the *Randolph-Macon* monthly. From over the line we have the *Queen's College Journal*, which we are glad to see, with a sound letter on "The Ideal Examination;" while from the South comes our old friend, *The University Magazine*, with a new board, evidently not inferior, to judge by this number, to the old. The *Misc.* is as far from giddiness as from heaviness; yet why be like the German maiden, who could be gayer but would not? We have quite a small host of preparatory friends, the *Blair Lit.*, the *Lawrenceville Record*, *The Adelphton* and a new one, *The Signal*, that starts out well. They must not think that because we can't talk to or about them, that we don't appreciate them just the same. Before closing we will repeat one of our favorite remarks, that the new, often obscure, or rather causes us to pass more lightly over the old. But falling back on the *Harvard Advocate*, we find two of the best things in college journalism we have seen; its prize story, "Nicolas Slovaky," a powerfully written one, and yet in the easy vein that never fatigues, and the prize essay on "Pessimism." We would like—what—really! Yes, the time is up. So, *Adios*.

Books.

A HISTORY OF GERMAN LITERATURE. By W. Scherer. 2 Vols. (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons)

The translation of this German work, acknowledgedly the best source of information on the subject extant, is an event in pure literary criticism. Although eminently a critical people, the German tongue has produced its best critical work in the analysis of literature extraneous to itself. Schlegel turned to a more universal survey of the domain of letters, and in it to a specific few. This present work, "A History of German Literature from the Earliest Time to the Death of Goethe," goes back to the elemental factors in later development, and traces in their successive stages not merely the intellectual growth, but, a necessary corollary, the historical, as well, of German nationality. It gives us thus a survey through which pierce the well-defined periods and the causal influences shading from the one into and affecting the other. It is, also, a revelation as to the extraordinary mass of materials that even the comparative paucity of actual, much more preserved, work furnishes. It would be hard to say whether the first volume, treating of the ancient and mediæval times, or the second, discussing the modern school since Frederick the Great, is of more interest. The style of writing is above criticism. But of especial charm is the vast amount of anecdotal information and personal characterization of the authors described, while the specific value of the work itself will always be not alone in its comprehensiveness, and yet keeping in right compass, but, above all, in its accurate critiques and analyses, its grasp of the thought and history of each man and his productions, and its appendix, containing a chronological table and a bibliography, which is alone a book in itself.

OUTLINES OF UNIVERSAL HISTORY. By George P. Fisher, D.D., LL.D. (New York: Iverson, Blakeman, Taylor & Co.)

In another and wider sphere we have a still more extraordinary amount of labor involved, whose fruits appear in this work, and whose vast learning and erudition, together with historical research, it is hard to realize could be at the service of one man. The popular mind is very apt to confound scientific with superficial construction of data into a book. But such as the present work admit no such interpretation. In spite of its scattered details it is uniform and complete, neither spasmodic in describing separate eras, nor neglecting the prime essentials of a philosophy of history, a tracing out of cause and effect and a logical connecting of one with the other. Hence, what the author calls "the

unity of history" is admirably brought out. For the general student we have a work in large print, between whose chapters or paragraphs are found fine-print passages of collateral or more specific information, designed for the specialist. To be praised are, in addition, the clear and full maps and the most admirable summaries of the state of literature, concurrent with the events treated of, as well as the complete genealogies. Paper and type are excellent.

OCRANA; OR ENGLAND AND HER COLONIES. By James Anthony Froude. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.)

The historian of England has turned from its past to consider its present. In the midst of the talk about annexation, federation and home rule, Mr. Froude takes up, in particular, the second of these, and applies to its discussion the principles, modified by circumstances, of the other two. Starting from home, he has made the tour of the sun-neversets-on-it circle, and with the combination of his clear and pleasing style, his easy and natural descriptions of new and interesting localities, and his discriminating remarks on peoples and political positions, has made, from his own investigations and the remarks of others, an agreeable book of travels, as well as a really important contribution to general literature, but especially a work of some moment in regard to the present aspect of England's colonial policy. The author's own points of view, aristocrat as he is in his tendencies, may lead him to a somewhat warped view as to the future of democracy, but though sometimes seemingly inconsistent in his assertions, and while his reasoning may at other times admit of some question as to its logicity, his historical deductions are mostly clear and incontrovertible as data. The view of the Revolution and its effects is a case in point. The necessity of intimacy with the colonies as both a breathing-spot and one to which England can turn as a relief from the growing sordidness of the age is emphasized, as is the policy of keeping a union politically. But the plea rests upon a do-nothing scheme, which will let things take their own course; perhaps, after all, the wisest of plans. The book has a chapter on America, where the author pays a graceful tribute to our energy and society, while regretting that, as a people, we lack the sense of beauty in a full degree.

A MORTAL ANTIPATHY. O. W. Holmes. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, & Co.)

The ripened charm and perfected beauty of style of Dr. Holmes needs no word of comment. After an interval of many years, he begins in the "New" a continuation of the old "Portfolio," by an introduction which is almost if not the best portion of his romance, and in which he discusses various themes that regard himself with the simplicity that in him is so interesting, and with the undercurrent of contemplation and reminiscence in view of approaching close of life, that strikes a tender

and responsive chord in each heart. As to the novel itself, it rests upon a peculiar psycho-physical phenomenon by which a young man scholarly, refined and rich lives in a state of solitude, fleeing fair woman, because in his babyhood a cousin had suddenly bounced him into the air, when he fell over a balcony, and from that time the approach of a woman caused him to go almost into convulsions, by the effect on the nervous system. After various incidents, while sick, the house takes fire and he is rescued by a beautiful specimen of strength in a young lady, the shock of which incident neutralizes his mental disease and restores his nervous equilibrium. The story ends in their marriage, and is sweetly and simply told with the author's old-time wealth of thought and of stories deftly woven in the narrative.

MICHIGAN. By Thomas M. Cooley. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)

In the admirable American Commonwealth Series we have this, another volume. We are entirely too prone to regard our Western States and Territories as growths contemporaneous with ourselves, and to forget that their history is as old and almost as interesting as our own. In fact, the adventures of Marquette, Cadillac, and others are of the most striking of our historical records. After dwelling on these the author considers the successive stages of sovereignty which this portion of our Great Northwestern Territory passed through, and when fairly established as an integral part of the Union, calls particular attention to its financial history and its protective position as to the tariff. It is the most compact and yet complete history of the State published, as each of these volumes in this series is meant to be in its own department.

FIAMMETTA. By W. W. Story. (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)

It needs neither the choice of an artistic theme, nor the artistic use of words and phrases in imaginative or descriptive passages, to recognize the genius of the artist permeating this idyllic little story. Mr. Story is known by his versatility of talent with pen, pencil and chisel. And he now assumes the new guise in which he combines his artistic perceptions so well. We have no intricacy of plot, no multiplicity of characters, but the sweet and exquisitely pathetic little story of a beautiful and innocent Italian girl falling in love with an artist, who reciprocates her love, is taken out of the way at the summer's close by a friend, and comes back only when called to the bedside of the poor girl, dying from a broken heart and exposure when seeking the places he haunted during his summer. The pictures are well drawn, the natives and their simple manners well described, and the moral crisis, looked at abstractly, strongly delineated. But to us the character of Stenoni seems somewhat impossible, while we admire his moral strength, because, first, we doubt if his artistic susceptibility could have been so held down, and, secondly, if any man, even the most self-contained, could have so

checked his feelings as never, even once, to betray them, save in one sole instance. The climax of his departure is as artistic as could be well conceived in its appeal, both to a moral beauty of innocence and love and to the well-trained literary sense of the reader. Would that we had more of this well-wrought style of literature, both in its finish and freedom from false excitement.

MADAME DE MAINTENON. By J. Cotter Morrison. (New York: Scribner & Welford.)

The tendency to specialize is nowhere more prominent than in historical work, especially as every year brings out more distinctly and unexpectedly the side-lights of history. This interesting little monograph, discussing the two views as to the character and conduct of the famous personage it treats of, inclines almost entirely to that side of the mean which considers her as maligned by the scandalous reports of jealous-minded contemporaries, and portrays her, justly, as ambitious, but yet a factor for good in the influences she exerted and above question amidst the licentious indulgences of the dissolute court. As to her marriage with Louis, the theme has ceased to be discussed, as being in every sense what it ought to have been, and at the right time. The parchment form of this study is quite pleasing.

THE STORY OF THE JEWS. By James K. Hosmer. (New York: G. B. Putnam's Sons.)

The publishers have devised the series of which this is one volume, to occupy minds at that medium stage between youth and maturity so-called. But, as is apt to be the case with works of this kind, as we have several times noticed, while apparently keeping to their self-imposed sphere, they shade insensibly and have enough of interest to hold the interested attention of older and riper judgments. A more interesting subject could not be chosen, for, in spite of centuries of tyrannizing public opinion and prejudice, the Jew is what he always has been, surrounded with a halo as of divine reflection and placed in a network of myth and fact which finds no parallel. 'Only by such a work as this do we grasp and fully recognize the importance of the Jew as a factor in history and the growth of civilization. For, confining oneself merely to the modern period which the author calls "The Breaking of the Chain," we have the names of the numerous brilliant Jews in every walk of life, as the Rothschilds, Meyer, Montefiore, Beaconsfield, Heine, Halévy, and the Mendelssohn, with scores of others which rise up. The author is singularly just in his criticisms and in his opinions, and yet sympathizes with the wrongs which oppressed Israel has undergone for two thousand years, and rejoices, as all do, in the better dawn of the present.

PROBLEMS IN PHILOSOPHY. By John Bascom. (New York: G. B. Putnam's Sons.)

President Bascom's name is a voucher in itself of the value and wisdom of his philosophical speculations and conclusions. As the author himself speaks of the "unavoidable difficulty which attends on the concise handling of topics remote from familiar thoughts," it is almost impossible to even outline the themes he takes up, which he says are the "more obscure topics of philosophy." Their obscurity but emphasizes their importance the more. As between empiricism and intuitivism, the author inclines to the latter view. As of special and practical utility to the advanced college student, we would mention in particular the discussions respectively entitled, "Methods in Philosophy," "The Fundamental Relations of Logic," "Universality of Law," and "A Philosophy of History," all of which, in spite of the abstruseness of their subjects, are defined and expounded with great clearness and in a short, coupé style, very different from the average metaphysical discussion. A deep religious conviction pervades the work.

INQUIRENDO ISLAND. By Hudor Genone. (New York: G. B. Putnam's Sons.)

Whatever name may stand as the synonym of this *nom de plume*, we must concede to its bearer a remarkably acute mind, and a quite extraordinary satiric power. We are first shocked by the bold handling of themes and texts ingrained in our natures by religious training, and for which the author's style of treatment seems intensely irreverent. The audacity of this use for satiric purposes is quite appalling. A young man, blown to a desert island in an open boat by a storm, not understanding clearly the mode of life and thought, is arrested as a lunatic, undergoes various phases of treatment for insanity and condemned to death by drowning, prepares a coffin which floats him and his bride safely back to his original home. The title *Inquirendo* is suggested by the writ *De Lunatico*. The island so named has various cults, in whose descriptions we recognize, through the thinly-veiled words, the different religious denominations and their systems, against which is directed the keen, witty and powerful satire, which also incidentally attacks many of the current opinions, as exemplified in courts, expert testimony, insanity commissions, and abounds in other easily-divined hits. The author begs us to read his postface, in which he denies irreverence, and though first impressions may differ from his view, yet we are led to believe in it to a limited extent. Schisms and sects are the seeds of infidelity. And this the author means will follow, by his treatment of what he calls the superstitions of religion; that is, its outward expression in forms. The satires on Ingersoll, the newspaper of the day and the revision are wonderfully good. But, as one of the final letters says, "if weak minds read it, and translate it as opposed to truth, its delicate bits of writing,

and the tenderness and pathos of some of the scenes which you have depicted, will only add to the force of its supposed arguments." There lies the moral danger.

MECHANICS AND FAITH. By Charles Talbot Porter. (New York: G. B. Putman's Sons.)

The author's purpose is to show the harmony that exists between reason and faith by means of certain truths which he assumes and explains in his introduction. "Force, Truth, Love and Beauty are the four spiritual realities which, in their unity, interpenetrate, if, indeed, they do not constitute all material forms of being." The three others are manifestations of love. He does not believe in a complete materialization applied to all things, but that the spiritual realities are brought directly to man's notice, while their forms are known by organs of physical perception. In addition, matter is identical with the force. The book, in the light of such views, discusses various relations of truth in the spiritual, revealed by force in the physical, through a series of twenty-four admirably written papers, whose titles, "The Criterion of Truth," "Revelation," "Coöperation," "Materialism," "Faith," "Prayer," *et multos al.*, reveal their value.

WHITE HEATHER. By William Black. (New York: Harper & Bros.)

We find Black playing on the same chords, with but slight variations. Yet his work, however repetitious, has always the two charms of a healthy tone in both theme and in the description of brisk, bracing, breezy, Scottish out-of-door life on lakes and moors, and also the simplicity of a sweet little love story which turns out happily.

The characteristics of Black's style are this strong Scotch element and his passionate love for sport, in this case salmon fishing. The plot is very simple, and treats of the young man loving a little above his station, going away to make a name in the city, falling into evil habits, and rescued by the sudden appearance, through a letter, of a sprig of white heather, followed by the maiden of the story herself, who unselfishly disregards conventional love-making, and, giving him to understand her love, reclaims him, and marries him. The good angel being a wealthy American, who makes Ronald overseer of his new Scotch estate. Though we have seen somewhere objections made to the treatment of the characteristic Americans, the main features of the delineation strike us as being an exceedingly good representation of our "points," and the spirit of generous admiration, unaffected by satire, for our national traits leaves nothing to cavil at; though the type of the pronounced Westerner is somewhat out of date now. Black has excelled nowhere his description or sweet story in this book.

TO BE REVIEWED:

VALENTINO. By W. W. Astor. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.)

HOW TO BE HAPPY THOUGH MARRIED. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.)

AN IRON CROWN. By ———. (Chicago: T. S. Denison.)